

SUBPART H—Reserved.

COVID-19 ORIGIN ACT OF 2023

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 619, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 619) to require the Director of National Intelligence to declassify information relating to the origin of COVID-19, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 619) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 619

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “COVID-19 Origin Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) identifying the origin of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is critical for preventing a similar pandemic from occurring in the future;

(2) there is reason to believe the COVID-19 pandemic may have originated at the Wuhan Institute of Virology; and

(3) the Director of National Intelligence should declassify and make available to the public as much information as possible about the origin of COVID-19 so the United States and like-minded countries can—

(A) identify the origin of COVID-19 as expeditiously as possible, and

(B) use that information to take all appropriate measures to prevent a similar pandemic from occurring again.

SEC. 3. DECLASSIFICATION OF INFORMATION RELATED TO THE ORIGIN OF COVID-19.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence shall—

(1) declassify any and all information relating to potential links between the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the origin of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), including—

(A) activities performed by the Wuhan Institute of Virology with or on behalf of the People's Liberation Army;

(B) coronavirus research or other related activities performed at the Wuhan Institute of Virology prior to the outbreak of COVID-19; and

(C) researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology who fell ill in autumn 2019, including for any such researcher—

(i) the researcher's name;

(ii) the researcher's symptoms;

(iii) the date of the onset of the researcher's symptoms;

(iv) the researcher's role at the Wuhan Institute of Virology;

(v) whether the researcher was involved with or exposed to coronavirus research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology;

(vi) whether the researcher visited a hospital while they were ill; and

(vii) a description of any other actions taken by the researcher that may suggest they were experiencing a serious illness at the time; and

(2) submit to Congress an unclassified report that contains—

(A) all of the information described under paragraph (1); and

(B) only such redactions as the Director determines necessary to protect sources and methods.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
MARCH 2, 2023

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 2; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Lawless nomination postcloture; further that at 11:30 a.m., the Senate vote on confirmation of the Lawless nomination and the motion to invoke cloture on the Gallagher nomination; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be considered expired and the confirmation votes on the Simmons and Gallagher nominations be at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Republican leader; further that the Senate recess following the cloture vote on the Gallagher nomination until 1:45 p.m.; and that at 1:45 p.m., the Senate vote on confirmation of the Grey nomination; finally, if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senators LANKFORD and CRUZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

HISTORIC BIG 10 BALLROOM

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I have to tell you, this past weekend, I stood with the Williams' family and Shaw family, with hundreds of other folks, and I listened to live music in the Historic Big 10 Ballroom.

Now, that may not mean a lot to a lot of folks in this room, but it is a

really big deal in my State, in Oklahoma, to hear live music in the Big 10 Ballroom.

Let me set the scene for you: Lonnie Williams was one of the first African-American police officers in Tulsa, OK. Now, I have spoken many times to this body about Greenwood and about the race massacre that happened May 31 and June 1 of 1921.

We have talked at length about what happened during that time for what is, in all likelihood, the worst race massacre in American history. It was in 1921. So for Lonnie Williams to be one of the first Black police officers in Tulsa was really a big deal.

He served in the police department, and he opened up several other businesses as his side hustle, and then, eventually, opened up what he called the Big 10 Ballroom in 1948.

It was a venue for Black artists to be able to come in because in 1948, a lot of Black artists couldn't play in a lot of auditoriums in America, including in my State. So they would invite these great musicians to be able to come through, that they would tour, and there was this kind of behind-the-scenes group of venues that was scattered through the country where Black artists could perform, and the one that we had in Oklahoma was the Big 10.

Now, it was no simple thing for them to be able to travel because at the time when those Black artists were traveling, they couldn't be in a lot of hotels; they couldn't eat in a lot of restaurants. But when they came to Greenwood, there were still families who would welcome them in.

The Williams' family, who owned the Big 10, their family, in fact, would host folks. They still tell stories about getting up in the morning and stepping over the Temptations sleeping in their living room. And when I talk about artists playing in the Big 10, I am not talking about just any artists in American history; I am talking about Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Ike and Tina Turner, Ray Charles, James Brown, Wilson Pickett, B.B. King, Fats Domino, Little Richard, and I have already mentioned the Temptations.

Interestingly enough, the last place that Otis Redding played before he died in a plane crash was the Big 10 Ballroom in Tulsa, OK.

Now you know why we call it the Historic Big 10 Ballroom. That Ballroom was the place to be able to get music in North Tulsa for decades, and then it closed down in the 1960s. A lot of urban renewal was happening in that area, and a lot of things were shifting. The building was used for a while as a beauty supply warehouse, quite frankly. The roof caved in eventually as they abandoned it, and it sat idle for more than two decades. Quite frankly, an eyesore in the neighborhood, but to the Williams family and to lots of other folks in North Tulsa, when they drove up and down Apache, they would still see the glory of the Big 10 and what she could be in the days ahead.